

SNAP Talking Points And Messages

Following are suggested talking points regarding SNAP. You are encouraged to localize this information with State or local SNAP data, or promote State-specific resources such as a toll-free SNAP information line or prescreening tool.

SNAP is the first line of defense against hunger.

- SNAP benefits provide much-needed temporary help with the grocery bill so that low-income people can put nutritious, healthy food on the table.
- Nearly half of those who receive SNAP benefits are children.

SNAP is a nutrition program that helps low-income families and individuals purchase nutritious, healthy food. It is the cornerstone of the Nation's nutrition assistance safety net.

- Low-income people get financial support to help with their grocery bills so they can buy fruits and vegetables, whole-grain foods, dairy products, and other healthy foods. In addition, many SNAP participants are offered free nutrition education materials and classes to help them make good purchasing choices and stretch their food dollars.

SNAP has made some fundamental changes in recent years that make it easier to:

- Find out about the program
 - Individuals can call **1-800-221-5689** for a free information packet to learn more about SNAP and how to apply. Information is available in English and Spanish.
 - Individuals can go to a Web site featuring a prescreening tool and, by answering a few simple questions, determine if they are eligible for SNAP benefits and how much they might receive. The Web site address is www.snap-step1.usda.gov/fns/snap.
- Apply for benefits
 - FNS and States are working to simplify the application process.
- Shop for healthy food
 - There are no more paper coupons. Now, benefits are delivered with an electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card that works like a debit card at the grocery store.

SNAP is a win-win for low-income people, local retailers, and local communities.

- Each \$5 in new SNAP benefits generates almost twice that amount in economic activity for the community.
- The average benefit per person is about \$101 a month (fiscal year 2008 data). That translates into money spent at local grocery stores.
- SNAP benefits are funded with Federal dollars. When everyone who is eligible for the program receives benefits, State and local economies also benefit.
- Research shows that low-income households participating in SNAP have access to more food energy, protein, and an array of essential vitamins and minerals in their home food supply compared to eligible nonparticipants.
- Since SNAP benefits help defray the costs of buying healthy foods, low-income people are less likely to have to make hard choices between eating right and paying for other essentials.

USDA and the antihunger community are working as partners to ensure that everyone who is eligible for SNAP knows about it and is able to access benefits.

- Many low-income people are not aware of their eligibility and how to apply, particularly those who are working, seniors, or legal immigrants.
- To ensure that everyone who is eligible knows about the benefits of the program, USDA is conducting a national media campaign.